

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 MCT-01 OMB-01 COME-00 EURE-00 /092 W

----- 111422

P R 031524Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8406

INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS, DECEMBER 3

1. THE PAPERS REPORT THAT BRITAIN IS NOW PREPARED TO
ACCEPT A DIRECT ROLE IN THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT.
THERE IS ALSO A REPORT OF NEW BITTERNESS AT THE TALKS,
AGGRAVATED BY THE PRESENCE OF GUERRILLA LEADERS.

2. TIMES DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT: "THE BRITISH GOVERN-
MENT IS NOW READY TO PLAY A 'DIRECT ROLE' IN THE TRANS-
ITIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR RHODESIA. THIS STATEMENT BY
MR. CROSLAND...HINTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S THINKING IS
MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN THE
PROPOSED INTERIM ADMINISTRATION.... WHAT THIS MEANS IS
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THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS READY TO APPOINT A BRITISH

GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN SALISBURY--THOUGH OUT OF DEFERENCE FOR WHITE FEELING HE MIGHT BE CALLED BY SOME OTHER TITLE--IF THE CONFERENCE CAN AGREE ON THE HANDOVER OF POWER TO THE BLACK MAJORITY."

3. GUARDIAN DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT PATRICK KEATLEY: "THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, MR. CROSLAND, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, HAS CAUTIOUSLY INDICATED TO AFRICAN NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO GET INVOLVED IN THE ACTUAL RUNNING OF RHODESIA UNDER THE PROPOSED INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

THE OFFER BREAKS NEW GROUND, ALTHOUGH IT IS UNLIKELY TO MEET THE MILITANT DEMANDS OF THE AFRICAN DELEGATES AND OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE FIVE FRONT LINE AFRICAN REPUBLICS."

4. FINANCIAL TIMES AFRICA CORRESPONDENT BRIDGET BLOOM: "THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS READY TO PLAY A DIRECT ROLE IN THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT IN RHODESIA ALTHOUGH THE NATURE OF THIS BRITISH PRESENCE WOULD DEPEND ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT."

FINANCIAL TIMES GENEVA CORRESPONDENT: "RHODESIAN NATIONALISTS ARE SHARPLY DIVIDED ON THE ROLE THAT BRITAIN SHOULD PLAY IN THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD LEADING TO INDEPENDENCE. THIS BECAME CLEAR AS DELEGATION LEADERS... LAUNCHED INTO NEARLY TWO HOURS OF SOMETIMES ACRIMONIOUS DISCUSSION ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT."

5. GUARDIAN STORY FROM GENEVA HEADLINED: "ROW ERUPTS OVER 'TERRORIST' SLUR AT GENEVA TALKS."

TIMES GENEVA CORRESPONDENT ALAN MCGREGOR: "(THE PRESENCE OF RHODESIA GUERRILLA LEADERS AT THE CONFERENCE) WAS DOUBTLESS A FACTOR IN ANOTHER OF THE EMOTIONAL FLASHPOINTS NOW BECOMING COMMONPLACE."

6. DAILY TELEGRAPH CORRESPONDENT DAVID ADAMSON IN GENEVA: "DELEGATES TO THE RHODESIA CONFERENCE REACHED A NEW PEAK OF INCOMPATIBILITY YESTERDAY, BUT PUT IN THEIR MOST CONSTRUCTIVE DAY'S WORK SINCE THEIR FIRST MEETING UNCLASSIFIED

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MORE THAN A MONTH AGO.... LIFE IN GENEVA HAS LONG LOST WHATEVER INITIAL GLAMOUR IT MAY HAVE HAD FOR THE AFRICAN DELEGATIONS, AS THE GUERRILLAS WILL SOON LEARN. IN FACT, DISENCHANTMENT IS SUCH THAT THERE IS A STRONG MOVE TO HAVE THE INEVITABLE POST-CHRISTMAS SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE HELD ELSEWHERE."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS, SELFDETERMINATION, DEPENDENCIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 DEC 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LONDON19543
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760448-0161
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761275/aaaacngu.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: wolfsd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAY 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <10 AUG 2004 by wolfsd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS, DECEMBER 3
TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006